The Plaza Mayor and the Shaping of Baroque Madrid

JESÚS ESCOBAR

Fairfield University

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

http://www.cambridge.org

© Jesús R. Escobar 2003

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2004

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Janson Text 11/15 pt. and Granjon SC & OSF *System* LaTeX 2ε [TB]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data is available.

ISBN 0 521 81507 X hardback

Publishing of this book is made possible, in part, by a grant
from the Publications Committee, Department of Art and
Archaeology, Princeton University, and the Program for
Cultural Cooperation between Spain's Ministry of Education,
Culture, and Sports and United States Universities.

Contents

	List of Illustrations	*page* ix
	Acknowledgments	xvii
	A Note on the Sources	xxiii
	Abbreviations	xxv
	Introduction	1
1	Madrid, Town and Court	17
2	Architecture and Bureaucracy	61
3	Sixteenth-Century Initiatives	84
4	The Panadería and Its Impact	115
5	Seventeenth-Century Reforms	143
6	The Plaza Mayor of Madrid as Political Symbol	190
	Epilogue	222
	Appendix A: Regulations for Urban Reforms in Madrid, 1591	225
	Appendix B: Property Ownership and Residents of the Plaza Mayor in 1618	231
	Appendix C: The Plaza Mayor, 1630–1830	241

Notes 261
Glossary 317
Select Bibliography 321

List of Illustrations

1 Madrid, Plaza Mayor, view of the northern range from the southeast. *page* 2

2 Juan de la Corte, *View of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid in 1623*, 1630s. Oil on canvas. 3

3 Map of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid and its environs. 10

4 Plaza Mayor, view through portico along the southern range to the Calle Imperial. 11

5 Plaza Mayor, Madrid, detail of windows along the eastern range. 12

6 Plaza Mayor, Madrid, municipal building in the southern range. 13

7 Juan Gómez de Mora, Elevation drawing of the house of Juan Gómez de Arratia along the Calle Nueva, 1619. Pen and color washes on paper. 15

8 Anton van den Wyngaerde, Panoramic view of Madrid, c. 1562. Pen and color washes on paper. 18

9 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Philip II*, from Lodovico Guicciardini, *Descrittione di tutti i Paesi Bassi* (Antwerp: Christofano Plantino, 1581). 22

10 Pedro Peret after Juan de Herrera, Bird's-eye view of the Monastery of El Escorial, from *Las Estampas de la Fábrica de San Lorenzo el Real de El Escorial* (Madrid, 1583–9). 23

11 Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen, *L'Aqueduct de Segovie* and *Le Chasteau de Madril*, 1536. Etching. 27

12 Wyngaerde, Sketch of the Monastery of San Jerónimo, from a study for a view of Madrid. Pen on paper. 29

13 Map of Madrid in 1535. 29
14 Anton van den Wyngaerde, Study for a view of Madrid, c. 1562. Pen on paper. 30
15 Anton van den Wyngaerde, Study for a view of Madrid, detail of Plaza de San Salvador. 32
16 Plaza de la Villa, Madrid. 33
17 Artist unknown, Map of hunting grounds in the vicinity of Madrid, detail, 1560s. Pen on paper. 33
18 Map of the Arrabal de Santa Cruz. 35
19 Juan de Valencia, Plan of the Plaza del Arrabal, Madrid, 1581. Pen on paper. 36
20 Anton van den Wyngaerde, Panoramic view of Madrid, detail of southern limits of Madrid within the walls and the Arrabal de Santa Cruz beyond. 37
21 Chinchón, Plaza Mayor, early sixteenth century. 38
22 Piazza Ducale, Vigevano, 1492–4. 39
23 Anton van den Wyngaerde, Panoramic view of Medina del Campo, detail with market square, 1565. Pen and color washes on paper. 40
24 Juan Gómez de Mora workshop, Elevation and section for window and upper-story residence in the Plaza Mayor, 1632. Pen and color washes on paper. 41
25 Juan Gómez de Mora, Plan of the ground-level shop of Jusepe de la Cueva in the Plaza Mayor, 1618. Pen on paper. 42
26 Anton van den Wyngaerde, Study for a view of Madrid, detail of Casa del Campo, c. 1562. Pen on paper. 48
27 Jehan Lhermite, *El Pardo*, from *Le Passetemps*, folio 98. Pen and color washes on paper. 49
28 Artist unknown, View of the royal retreat and gardens of Aranjuez, c. 1620. 50
29 Anton van den Wyngaerde, Panoramic view of the royal retreat and forest at Valsaín, detail, 1562. Pen and color washes on paper. 51
30 Map of Madrid: Growth between 1535 and 1600. 53
31 "De Wit" map of Madrid, c. 1650s. Etching. 55

32 Pedro Teixeira, *Topographia de la Villa de Madrid*, 1656. 56
33 Teixeira, *Topographia de la Villa de Madrid*, detail of royal arms and dedication, 1656. 59
34 Antonio and Diego Sillero, Plan of the Luján chapel in the Church of San Pedro, Madrid, 1587. Pen on paper. 78
35 Alcalá de Henares, Calle Mayor, detail of a *sopportal*, or covered portico, mid–sixteenth century. 87
36 Juan de Valencia, Plan of the Plaza del Arrabal, detail of northern limit and the *manzana*. 88
37 Proposed location of Francisco de Sotomayor's Panadería in the Plaza Mayor, c. 1565. 91
38 Juan de Valencia, Plan for reform of the Plaza del Arrabal, 1581. Pen on paper. 96
39 Juan de Valencia, Plan for reform of the Plaza del Arrabal, detail of new *manzana*. 97
40 Wenceslaus Hollar, The Royal Exchange, London, 1650. Etching. 98
41 Artist unknown, *View of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid*, c. 1620. Oil on canvas. 105
42 Calle de la Cebadería, Valladolid, detail of porticoes. 106
43 Arch of the Cuchilleros and the Cava de San Miguel, Madrid. 108
44 Map of the Plaza Mayor in December 1586. 110
45 Panadería, facade, view from a southwestern balcony of the Plaza Mayor. 116
46 Panadería, detail of façade with 1992 mural program by Carlos Franco. 117
47 Map of Madrid in 1600, with reforms proposed by the Committee of Public Works in June 1590. 120
48 Monastery of El Escorial, Basilica, façade. 123
49 Juan Gómez de Mora workshop, Plan of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid, detail of the Panadería, c. 1625. 130
50 Panadería, ground-level arcade. 131
51 Juan de la Corte, *View of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid in 1623*, detail of the Panadería. 132

52 Artist unknown, *View of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid*, detail of the Panadería. 138
53 Sebastiano Serlio, Elevation of a courtyard from the Chateau de Fountainbleau, from the Seventh Book on Architecture in *Tutte l'Opere di Architettura* (Venice: Francesco de' Franceschi, 1600). 139
54 Naples, Palazzo Reale, façade by Domenico Fontana, begun 1599. 140
55 Granada, Palacio de la Chancellería, façade by Francisco del Castillo, 1584–7. 140
56 Attributed to Melchisedek van Hooren, View of the Town Hall of Antwerp, from Lodovico Guicciardini, *Descrittioni di tutti i Paesi Bassi* (Antwerp: Christofano Plantino, 1567). 1441
57 Pietro Tacca, Equestrian Statue of Philip III, Plaza Mayor, Madrid, 1610–4. Bronze. 144
58 Photograph of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid with a garden in its center, late nineteenth century. 145
59 Francisco de Mora, Plan for reform of the Puerta de Guadalajara and Platería, 1597. Pen on paper. 147
60 Palencia, Calle Mayor, detail of porticoes. 148
61 Juan Gómez de Mora, Plan of the houses of Juan de Arce and Francisco Moreno at the intersection of Calle de Santiago and the Platería, 1613. Pen on paper. 149
62 Juan Gómez de Mora, Drawing of single-bay house elevation along the Platería, 1614. Pen and color washes on paper. 151
63 Reconstruction of Juan Gómez de Mora's plan for the Plaza Mayor in September 1617. 156
64 Artist unknown, Drawing of a viewing stand for the Plaza Mayor, 1725. 158
65 Reconstruction of the Calle de Toledo entry to the Plaza Mayor in 1617. 159
66 Juan Gómez de Mora, Plan of the main story of the Carnicería, 1618. 160

67 Reconstruction of proposals for the reform of the Plaza Mayor by Juan Gómez de Mora, January 1620. 167
68 Juan Gómez de Mora, Plan of weigh house along the Calle de las Postas, 1620. 168
69 Juan Gómez de Mora, Plan of the Calle Nueva between the Puerta de Guadalajara and the Plaza Mayor, 1620. 170
70 Plan of *manzana* number 193, from the Planimetría General de Madrid of 1762. 172
71 Juan Gómez de Mora, Drawing of Calle Nueva houses along the westernmost edge of the cloth merchants range, 1620. Pen and color washes on paper. 173
72 Alcalá de Henares, detail of balcony, early seventeenth century. 174
73 Juan Gómez de Mora, Plan and elevation of the house of Catalina de Reynosa along the Calle de Santiago, 1619. Pen on paper. 175
74 Calle Imperial, Madrid, detail of pilasters along street adjacent to the Plaza Mayor. 176
75 Artist unknown, *Place Mayor des Combats de Taureaux*, detail of the *Carte du Government de la Cour d'Espagne*, early eighteenth century. Etching. 176
76 Juan Gómez de Mora workshop, Section drawing of upper-story residence in the Plaza Mayor, detail of balcony. 178
77 Teodoro de Ardemans, Section of viewing stand built into Plaza Mayor portico, from *Gobierno político de las Fabricas* (Madrid: Francisco del Hierro, 1719). 179
78 Miguel Gómez de Mora, Plan of the Plaza Mayor with seating arrangement notations, 1626. 180
79 Manuel de Robles, Plan of the Plaza Mayor with names of vendors, c. 1625. Pen on paper. 181
80 Juan Gómez de Mora, Plan of the Plaza Mayor with market arrangement, c. 1625. Pen and color washes on paper. 182

81 Juan Gómez de Mora workshop, Plan of the Plaza Mayor market, detail of northern stalls and weigh stations. 183
82 Juan Gómez de Mora workshop, Plan of the Plaza Mayor market, detail of southern fruit and vegetable stands. 184
83 Juan van der Hamen y León, *Still-Life with Sweets*, 1622. Oil on canvas. 184
84 Map of Madrid in 1665, with lines indicating the reforms for ceremonial routes proposed in September 1620. 185
85 Manuel de Robles (?), Sketch of the Plaza Mayor with viewing stands and stage, 1625. Pen on paper. 187
86 Juan Gómez de Mora, Plan and elevation of stage in the Plaza Mayor for a Corpus Christi celebration, 1644. Pen on paper. 187
87 Juan Gómez de Mora, Elevation of stage in the Plaza Mayor for a Corpus Christi celebration, detail of stage and mobile scenery. 188
88 Artist unknown, Plan of the Plaza Mayor of Mexico City, 1596. Pen on paper. 198
89 Valladolid, Plaza Mayor, view of eastern range. 200
90 Sabbioneta, view of street leading to piazza before Santa Maria Assunta. 201
91 Miguel Gómez de Mora, Elevation drawing of the Carnicería range of the Plaza Mayor, 1626. Pen on paper. 207
92 Reconstruction of the Carnicería range of the Plaza Mayor. 207
93 Bologna, Piazza Maggiore, Portico dei Banchi, begun by Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola, 1565. 208
94 Aveline, *Turin, Ville capitale de Piemont, et Residence du Duc Savoye*, 1692. 209
95 Giovanni Francesco Bordino, Plan of Rome as a Star-Shaped City, from *De rebus praeclaris gestis a Sisto V* (Rome, 1588). 211
96 Paris, Place des Vosges (Royale), detail of royal pavilion. 212
97 Place des Vosges, detail of buildings along the northern range. 213

98 Wenceslaus Hollar, *Piazza in Convent Garden*, 1644. Etching. 213
99 View of the Cathedral and Plaza Mayor of Segovia, from Alexandre Laborde, *Voyage pittoresque et historique de l'Espagne* (Paris: Pierre Didot, 1806). 214
100 Córdoba, Plaza de la Corredora, view of northeastern range. 215
101 Plaza de la Corredora, detail of portico and house elevations. 216
102 Salamanca, Plaza Mayor and Ayuntamiento, built by Alberto Churriguera and Andrés García de Quiñones, 1729–88. 217
103 Francisco Domingo de Belbalet, Fortification of Lima, 1682. 218
104 Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, View of Lima, from the manuscript, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, 1612–16. 219
105 Pedro de Teixeira, *Topographia de la Villa de Madrid*, detail of the Plaza Mayor and environs. 212
106 Nicolas de Fer, *Madrid, Ville Considerable de la Nouvelle Castille*, detail of panoramic city view, 1704. Etching. 222
107 Pedro Teixeira, *Topographia de la Villa de Madrid*, detail of the Buen Retiro Palace. 243
108 Juan Gómez de Mora workshop, Plan of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid with stage in southwest corner for an *auto de fé*, 1632. Pen on paper. 244
109 Juan Gómez de Mora workshop, Plan of a stage for an *auto de fé* in the Plaza Mayor, 1632. Pen on paper. 245
110 Calle del Infierno, arch at the entry from the Calle Mayor. 246
111 Juan Gómez de Mora, Plan of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid, with four appended façade elevations, 1636. Pen on parchment and paper. 247
112 Juan Gómez de Mora, Plan of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid, detail of underside of the northern range. 248

113 Martín Fison, Designs for a clock and moon dial for the towers of the Panadería, 1625. Pen on paper. 249
114 Artist unknown, *View of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid during a bullfight*, before 1672. Oil on canvas. 250
115 Panadería, detail of city arms along arcade. 250
116 José Villareal, Plan of a new staircase for the Panadería, 1654. 251
117 Juan García de Gonzalo, Plan of a project for rebuilding the Panadería, 1672. 252
118 Panadería, Madrid, detail of western tower and turret. 254
119 Miguel Pérez, Proposal for an enclosure at the Calle de Toledo entry to the Plaza Mayor, 1679. Pen with color washes on paper. 255
120 Francisco Rizzi, *Auto de Fé in the Plaza Mayor of Madrid in 1680*, 1683. Oil on canvas. 256
121 Artist unknown, View of the Plaza Mayor in ruins, 1790. Etching. 258
122 Francisco Hernández, Luis Pons, and Juan de Villanueva, Plan for market arrangement in the Plaza Mayor, 1800. 259
123 Artist unknown, Design for a market stall in the Plaza Mayor, 1800. 259

Introduction

In the center of Old Madrid, at the juncture of the medieval city and its early modern expansion, stands the Plaza Mayor (Fig. 1). For the wandering tourist, the bartering stamp and coin dealer, or the lone woman in high heels running over the cobblestones in a film by Pedro Almodóvar, the Plaza Mayor offers a retreat from the bustle of downtown Madrid. Closed off by arches at street level, the grand city square of a uniform architectural design stands nearly silent. Once, however, the Plaza Mayor opened directly onto the streets of Madrid. Vibrant and crowded with people, the plaza pulsated at the heart of one of Europe's fastest growing cities.

The Plaza Mayor was planned and built as an urban centerpiece for a new capital envisioned by the Spanish Habsburg ruler Philip II (ruled 1556–98) and realized by the king and his successors. On most days, the plaza served as the principal market space of Madrid. Following a well-ordered arrangement, vendors brought fruit, vegetables, dried nuts, candied almonds, and other goods to sell from specially designed tables and stands. In shops located under the plaza's porticoes, merchants offered stationery, pastries, and luxury goods to the inhabitants of the Spanish court. Residents of all social classes also gathered in the plaza to buy bread and meat from municipal buildings that were part of the ensemble of the square. Merchants and courtiers, bureaucrats and widows alike lived in the apartments rising four stories above the ground-level shops that lined the perimeter of the Plaza Mayor. Housing in the plaza was built of brick and articulated at ground level by a granite colonnade and on balconies by iron balustrades.

FIGURE 1. Madrid, Plaza Mayor, view of the northern range from the southwest. (Photo, author.)

On festival days, the refined and utilitarian architecture of the plaza was transformed into a glorious arena for civic and court spectacles. The Flemish artist Juan de la Corte records such a display in his painting of a horse tournament in the Plaza Mayor held to honor Charles Stuart, the Prince of Wales, during his visit to Madrid in 1623[1] (Fig. 2). With an eye toward a truce between two nations in the midst of war, the English prince arrived in Madrid incognito to seek the hand of the Infanta María, sister of the nineteen-year-old Spanish king, Philip IV (ruled 1621–65). Warmly welcomed, Charles stayed for six months at the Spanish court and was entertained lavishly. Without doubt, the bullfights and tournaments held in the Plaza Mayor were the grandest of the many festivals he witnessed. Contemporary chroniclers write that as many as 50,000 spectators might have gathered in the Plaza Mayor during festivals such as the tournament recorded by the painter.[2] Residents displaced by such events could be heartened by the rental income they collected for prized viewing locations on their balconies, which were as valuable as seats in Madrid's playhouses.[3]

Figure 2. Juan de la Corte, *View of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid in 1623*, 1630s. Oil on canvas. (MM, IN 3422; photo, MM.)

Looming over the plaza in the center background of de la Corte's painting is the Panadería, a monumental edifice housing a bread mart at ground level, a royal apartment on its main floor, and private residences above. On the festive occasion captured by the artist, the king appears on horseback just to the left of the granite arcade fronting the Panadería. The other members of the Spanish royal family occupy the central window of the royal apartment, which is adorned with brocaded and gilt stencils. A special balcony was erected for the English prince and his entourage. Elsewhere in the plaza, seating arrangements reflect the etiquette and hierarchy of the Spanish Habsburg court. Ladies of the court sit to the right of the royal family, while male attendants stand in a more crowded arrangement on the balconies to the left.[4]

As in the arch entryways of a Roman amphitheater, the bays of the Plaza Mayor were similarly numbered to facilitate seating. Courtiers of all ranks, therefore, observed social hierarchies through their seating arrangements. Anyone in the square, even the visiting English, could understand the display of power by means of colors and symbols laid over balconies.[5] For instance, the Council of Castile, the crown's preeminent consultative body, sits in the main floor windows immediately west of the Panadería. Easily recognized by the crowd below, the judges sit in balconies surrounded by blue stenciled fabric.

The intended alliance between Spain and England ended in failure in the autumn of 1623. Yet Madrid and its Plaza Mayor, the public

stage on which the drama unfolded in part, grew in importance. In these early years of the seventeenth century, Madrid was very conscious of its status. Only six decades earlier, the capital was a secondary town in Castile noted for its market activity and its proximity to a cluster of royal retreats. In 1561, Philip II chose Madrid to serve as his court.[6] The town then underwent one of the most dramatic urban transformations in early modern Europe.[7] The choice of Madrid signaled the royal favor granted the city, and the order and regularity of the Plaza Mayor symbolized the good government the Spanish Habsburgs wished to impart to all of Spain.

Envisioning a Capital

This book is a case study of the Plaza Mayor of Madrid. It focuses on the process of shaping an urban environment on the part of early modern civic and royal institutions. The story is told within the context of the molding of an even larger entity, a political capital for the Spanish Habsburg empire that newly stretched around the globe. Although Madrid's physical transformation from a secondary town to a cosmopolitan city in the decades after 1561 is one of the most remarkable stories of its kind, no English-language study of the process has existed until now.[8] Important preliminary findings can be found in Catherine Wilkinson-Zerner's *Juan de Herrera: Architect to Philip II of Spain* (1993).[9] The portions of Wilkinson-Zerner's book devoted to Madrid are more concerned with the contribution of a singular architect to the city's urban history than with the larger social and political maneuverings of the building enterprise surveyed herein.

I have written this book to complement recent studies of other early modern cities and thereby evaluate Madrid in the broader contexts of Spain, Europe, and the Spanish colonial world. By examining the process of urban design, I hope also to contribute to the scholarly reappraisal of absolutism in the Baroque age.[10] Architectural history has much to contribute to this revised picture of the seventeenth

century. Hilary Ballon's *The Paris of Henri IV* (1991) has served as a model for this book.[11] In her work, Ballon explores the ways in which architects, royal advisers, and private individuals each played a role in building a showcase city. Tensions arose in such a process, as they did in Madrid. Lawsuits related to architectural undertakings in Madrid illustrate that Madrileños, the residents of the Spanish capital, were not discouraged from challenging an architectural program or even royal and municipal officials. As historians James Amelang, Helen Nader, and Richard Kagan have argued, the right to challenge authority was a built-in feature of Spanish urban culture.[12] Indeed, the contest between official planning initiatives and private concerns for property and status helped shape Madrid, just as Joseph Connors, John Pinto, and the late Richard Krautheimer have illustrated for Baroque Rome.[13]

Another aspect of my work is inspired by the interdisciplinary approach to urban history by the late Spiro Kostof. In his last works, *The City Shaped* (1991) and *The City Assembled* (1992), Kostof illustrated, on a worldwide scale, the long-lasting effect that interesting urban spaces can have on the souls of communities.[14] In all of Kostof's writing, the topography of a place and the ritual uses of that place are keys to understanding the ever-changing nature of a city.[15] The scholarship on early modern ritual by social and cultural historians such as Natalie Zemon Davis, Richard Trexler, and Edward Muir has also had an influence on recent works of architectural history, the present book included.[16] For Madrid, featured acts of public festivals were often recorded in great detail in manuscripts, books, and paintings. The mundane, and often equally illuminating, aspects of these celebrations usually go unnoted, although contracts and payments issued to the stage builders and performers who worked in the great theatrical stagings in Madrid are abundant. Historians of early modern Spain rely on the rich documentation that survives in Spanish archives, and I am indebted to much of their work for my own approach to the documents.[17]

The reconstruction of Madrid's architectural history in the early modern period has many obstacles. The neglect of Spain in the study of European urbanism, and the lack, therefore, of an intellectual framework on which to build a detailed case study, is the most difficult challenge in English-language scholarship. Among Spanish architectural

historians, the work of Fernando Marías offers the best introduction to the problem, as well as a sophisticated analytical approach.[18] I have also found the writing of Pedro Fraile, who considers "the other city of the king"– namely, its underlying political infrastructure – to be especially useful.[19] Despite important work by scholars in Spain, one still confronts gaping holes in the documented record, from the absence of biographical data on key individuals who built Madrid to the lack of research on guilds and their contribution to the city's economy.

On the topic of urban reform in Madrid, Francisco Iñiguez Almech's 1950 article on Philip II and the royal architect Juan de Herrera remains the pioneering study. The essay also highlights, however, further challenges facing the scholar interested in Madrid.[20] Based on research in Madrid's municipal archive, Iñiguez Almech outlines the reforms proposed by Philip II in the 1580s and 1590s, and attempts, simultaneously, to elevate Juan de Herrera to a position among the great architects of the European Renaissance. Given his concern with identifying a Spanish hero, Iñiguez Almech is not able to appreciate the participation of others in the planning of Madrid.[21] Most significantly, the historian overlooks the contributions of other architects, royal advisers, and bureaucrats. For instance, Juan de Valencia, a royal architect and cleric who emerges in the present study as one of the principal designers of Madrid, was simply labeled an assistant to Herrera.[22]

Ultimately, Iñiguez Almech was caught up in the nationalism of his era and sought to parallel Philip II and Herrera's work in Madrid with contemporary undertakings by Francisco Franco and his architects.[23] This is an aspect of his research that has gone largely unnoted. Yet Iñiguez Almech's implicit association of Philip II with the post–Civil War rebuilding of Madrid must contribute in part to the general oversight of Madrid in the literature on early modern cities.[24] Likewise, the scholarly approach to, not to mention the public reception of, Habsburg monuments such as El Escorial have undeniably been colored by the many Renaissance-inspired historicist monuments built by the nationalist regime in Madrid. Although much work remains to be done with regard to these lingering associations, scholars have begun to separate Philip II from twentieth-century politics, as well as from the propaganda surrounding the king in his own day.[25]

By focusing this book on the years 1560 to 1630, I am not only writing a microhistory, but also a history that cuts through the traditional art historical definitions of Renaissance and Baroque periods and styles. This book follows José Antonio Maravall's historical definition of Baroque from his influential study *The Culture of the Baroque* (1975).[26] According to Maravall, the Baroque age that gave rise to a theater state began around 1580, a date that coincides nicely with the shaping of Madrid and the arrival of Baroque urbanism in Europe as a whole. In many ways, the historical label seems more apt than a stylistic one in an effort that seeks to examine the process of city design.

"Is it really Baroque?" is a question I have been asked about the Plaza Mayor on a number of occasions. At the root of this question is a stylistic definition derived from architectural practice in mid-seventeenth-century Italy, specifically from Rome. Answering the question of style requires comparative analysis, and studies of other early modern cities offer interesting parallels with the architecture of Madrid. In his *Venice and the Renaissance* (1985), Manfredo Tafuri examined the particularities of a place in the periphery of the cosmopolitan capital of Rome.[27] As an international center of commerce, Venice attracted architects who saw great opportunities for building commissions. When Jacopo Sansovino and other Rome-based architects arrived following the Sack of Rome in 1527, a new classical style of building was introduced to Venice. The new style carried much symbolic value that, as Tafuri illustrated, was not always deemed proper for Venice.[28] The reasons for rejecting the classical style were not merely matters of taste, but also had to do with notions of civic and political life.

In Madrid, the Plaza Mayor was the largest of projects built in accordance with Renaissance and Baroque principles derived in part from practice in central Italy. But the Italian influence only went so far. The designers of Madrid's main square looked to the local building tradition in Castile, as well as to the artful rooflines and gables of Burgundian architecture best exemplified elsewhere in the Habsburg empire and especially in the buildings of the Low Countries.[29]

Moreover, the designers of the Plaza Mayor were concerned with an outward appearance of uniformity. One can find a full-blown

Baroque style *alla italiana* in contemporary churches and palaces in Madrid, but the style employed at the Plaza Mayor was subdued and especially suited to public architecture.[30] With a refined classicism expressed largely in brick, the buildings of the Plaza Mayor, save on those ceremonial days when they were transformed into theatrical backdrops, blended into the fabric of Madrid. The buildings also carried powerful associations with other royal works of the era of Philip II.

The combination of Spanish, Italian, and Netherlandish forms resulted in an architecture that spoke to the concept of empire and the international realm of the Spanish Habsburg monarchy. Located in the center of the city, the Plaza Mayor thus functioned as a forum for the new capital. Although scholars have noted a lack of Roman imperial ideology with regard to cultural production in Madrid in the sixteenth century,[31] the careful study of architecture and public spaces in the city suggests that alternative representations of empire existed in Madrid.[32]

From the start, Madrid was shaped to function as a new kind of city, the political center of the Spanish Habsburg government. With the exception of the appellate courts of Valladolid and Granada, or trade matters handled in Seville, most business related to governing the most powerful monarchy in Europe took place in Madrid. The royal councils dedicated to war, finance, and other areas of governance were all located in the city. They were essential components of an increasingly bureaucratic system of government that characterized early modern Spain.[33] Bureaucracy in Madrid, however, did not end with the court. Madrid also had its own local form of government, the Ayuntamiento. Composed of aldermen from Madrid's leading families, the municipal body was responsible for the upkeep of the city and soon came to sponsor the public works required by the court through increased taxation and even private loans.

Just as the government of Madrid was split between royal and municipal bodies, the city's building trade was also two tiered. One hierarchy of builders and planning officials was located in the Alcázar, or royal palace, and another responded to the decisions of the Ayuntamiento in the Plaza de San Salvador. For modern reforms as important as the Plaza Mayor, architects and builders of royal and